

# STRUGGLE ★ LA LUCHA

*for Socialism por el Socialismo*



## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2025

# Attempted trans genocide is a warning to the whole working class

By Melinda Butterfield

*Talk given by Melinda Butterfield of the Struggle for Socialism Party at the International Women's Day March and Teach-In in Baltimore on March 8, 2025.*

Hello friends, comrades and siblings. Happy International Women's Day.

Thank you to the organizers for inviting me to speak today. I admit that I really struggled with what I would say. On an important occasion like this, I'd like to give an inspiring, hopeful message about historic victories women have won and the battles ahead.

But as a trans woman living in Donald Trump's United States, it's hard to find anything positive to say. All of our communities are being attacked. The whole working class is under siege.

My immigrant sisters are subject to ICE terror and deportation, with their families being ripped apart. My Palestinian sisters are engulfed in ongoing genocide in Gaza, despite the ceasefire agreement, with Israel not only making military attacks, but cutting off food, medicine and electricity. My Black sisters here in Baltimore are mourning spouses and children murdered by police or jailed.

And right now, transgender people hold the distinction of being targets for eradication.

Let me say it again: The fascists running the government plan to eradicate us.

It's taking a toll.

About 10 days ago, an Indigenous trans woman from out west, someone I respect and admire, posted a suicide note on social media. She'd been targeted for months by white supremacist groups. They hung "wanted" posters with her photo in her neighborhood calling her a "groomer." She was exhausted from fighting so hard for so long, she wrote. She was simply done.

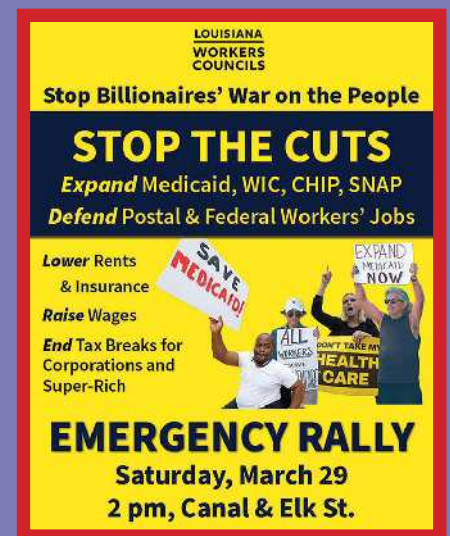
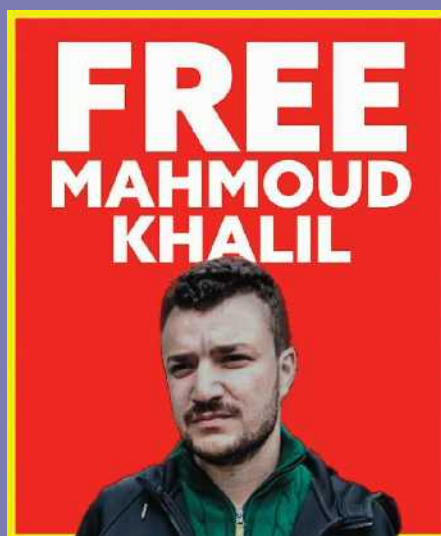
My heart ached for her, for our community's loss if she went through with it. But I understood. I've felt the same way more times

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SLL Photo: Melinda Butterfield

Oppressed genders lead march to Baltimore women's jail on International Women's Day, March 8, 2025.



- Hands off Rep. Al Green!
- NYC protests genocide in Gaza
- 'New Syria' & Zionist collaboration
- Who murdered Marielle Franco?
- Bleeding Europe – waging war on China
- Trump, Elon Musk and South Africa
- Ukraine guilty in Odessa massacre
- Release Venezuelan migrants





New Orleans, March 11 – activists held an emergency march for Mahmoud Khalil around the adjacent campuses of Loyola and Tulane University, where campus, city, and state police brutally attacked the student encampment last year. The march ended with a rally at the site of the former encampment. This action was led by NOLA 4 Palestine, Students for a Democratic Society, New Orleans Stop Helping Israel's Ports, and other groups. SLL photo



Palestinian activist and former Columbia University student **Mahmoud Khalil** was abducted by ICE agents on March 8 and transferred to the Lasalle detention center (a for-profit ICE prison) in Jena, Louisiana.



Activists in New Orleans chanted 'we want justice / you say how? / free Mahmoud Khalil now!' and 'brick by brick / wall by wall / Donald Trump will fall!'

SLL photo

## By Workers Voice Socialist Movement

### Defend the Right to Organize, Protest Resist Trump's Gestapo Tactics Shut Down Immigrant Prisons, Abolish ICE

Palestinian activist and former Columbia University student Mahmoud Khalil was abducted by ICE agents on March 8 and was transferred to the LaSalle detention center (a for-profit ICE prison) in Jena, Louisiana. Yesterday, after major protests, a federal judge temporarily halted his deportation.

This act of political repression is a major escalation by Trump. Already, thousands of our immigrant siblings suffer unjust detention, often in retaliation for organizing for better conditions in their workplaces and communities. During Trump's first term, ICE agents carried out a mass raid of 680 workers at a poultry

processing plant in Mississippi. Many were organizing with the Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and had just won a \$3.75 million settlement against Koch Foods for wage theft, discrimination, and sexual harassment.

The persecution of Khalil is a replay of the Palmer Raids which targeted immigrants as a means of crushing the growing movement within the U.S. for workers' rights, women's liberation, and more. Just as the Palmer Raids were carried out to retaliate against a heroic strike of miners — organized jointly by citizen and immigrant workers — the detention of Khalil is meant to crush the progressive student movement which exploded in protest of the U.S.-funded genocide in Palestine.

Trump is threatening to withhold disaster relief for state and city governments that do not bend to his fascist dictates. He is threatening to defund schools

that teach history. The mass firings carried out by Musk and Trump are also part of their campaign of terror. They want to crush the movement for gender equality, environmental justice, Black liberation — anything that stands in the way of their efforts to squeeze as much profit from us as they can.

Our power to resist Trump's fascist moves derives from our unity, our ability to act as one.

Stand up for our immigrant siblings and demand full legal and labor rights for them all. Close the camps.

Stand with our Palestinian siblings as they struggle to liberate their homeland from the grips of U.S.-funded fascism. Their struggle is ours.

#NotOneMore

#AbolishICE

#FreeMahmoudKhalil

*Workers Voice Socialist Movement is based in New Orleans, Louisiana.*

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# Hands off Rep. Al Green! It's fascist Trump who's 'out of order'

By Stephen Millies

Texas Rep. Al Green was absolutely justified for challenging Donald Trump during the wannabe dictator's March 4 speech to a joint session of Congress.

George Wallace — whose Alabama state troopers clubbed voting rights protesters in Selma 60 years ago — couldn't have given a more racist speech than Trump did.

When Green, a Black member of Congress, declared "you have no mandate to cut Medicaid," he was defending 72 million people who depend on the program for their health care. Millions more qualify for it but are not signed up.

Medicaid covers 62% of those living in nursing homes. It pays the bills for 41% of all births in the U.S.

Nearly half of New York City's population is enrolled in Medicaid.

Donald Trump and his co-president Elon Musk want to destroy Medicaid. The billionaire tag team is seeking to wreck Medicare and privatize Social Security as well.

Arkansas and Idaho have already enacted cruel and demagogic "work requirement" legislation that's designed to kick thousands of poor people off Medicaid. So have Georgia and Ohio.

If people were able to find jobs — with health insurance and accessible by public transit — they wouldn't need Medicaid in the first place. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that 36 million people are in danger of losing their Medicaid benefits under cutbacks being proposed in Congress.

## Democratic Party uselessness

After the Republican Speaker Mike Johnson ordered Al Green be taken off the floor, the more than 200 Democratic representatives and senators in attendance should have surrounded Green. It was their duty to defend the 77-year-old disabled Black man while an almost all-white mob of Republicans was mocking him.

Some Democrats, including California representative Maxine Waters, had the good sense and decency to boycott Trump's speech to his Reichstag deputies.

The least the Democrats could have done was to walk out in solidarity with Al Green. That's what Massachusetts Rep.



When Al Green, a Black member of Congress, declared 'you have no mandate to cut Medicaid,' he was defending 72 million people who depend on the program for their health care. Millions more qualify but are not signed up.

Ayanna Pressley, a member of the Black Congressional Caucus, did.

A few days later, 10 Democrats joined with every Republican in the House of Representatives to censure Al Green. Fortunately, several members of Congress drowned out House Speaker Mike Johnson by singing "We Shall Overcome."

Johnson tweeted beforehand that Green "disgraced the institution of Congress." It's Mike Johnson and every other Trump supporter who's a disgrace.

Just as bad was the official Democratic Party response to Trump's speech given by Michigan Sen. Elissa Slotkin. The former CIA analyst, who served three tours in U.S.-occupied Iraq, actually praised racist Ronald Reagan in her talk.

When he was California governor, Reagan called his buddy Richard Nixon in the White House and described African delegates to the United Nations as "monkeys." Later as president, Reagan invaded the Black Caribbean island of Grenada.

Tens of thousands of people died because Reagan ignored the HIV/AIDS crisis.

The washed-up matinee idol deliberately started his 1980 presidential campaign in Philadelphia, Mississippi, calling for "states' rights." Reagan uttered this white supremacist slogan near where the Black and Jewish martyrs James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and

Michael Schwerner were murdered by the Ku Klux Klan.

Even John Oliver thought that praising Reagan was stupid. The comedian said the two positive things about Reagan were "like, he was our only president to make a movie with a chimp. Or, he's dead."

When she was still a representative and later as a newly elected Senator, Slotkin voted for the misnamed Lankin Riley act. This hate legislation used the murder of a Georgia college student to allow immigrants who have been arrested, not convicted, to be deported. This takes away the presumption of innocence — a fundamental democratic right of anyone facing trial — from those not citizens.

Slotkin was selected to give the rebuttal to Trump just because of her pro-war and anti-immigrant stances.

## Repulsive, bigoted slander

Trump told one lie after another in his 100-minute long speech to Congress. He even claimed that the U.S. spent \$8 million to make mice transgender — a whopper similar to the claim of nutjob Alex Jones that frogs were turning gay.

While Hitler blamed Jewish people for every problem, Trump murders Palestinians and uses transgender people and immigrants as scapegoats.

Many of Trump's biggest lies were about Black people and Africa.

With no proof whatsoever, he accused Stacey Abrams — the well-known Black political figure from Georgia — of stealing from a \$1.9 billion government program.

Trump mocked Lesotho, claiming that no one has heard of the African country of over two million people. This was also a not-so-disguised swipe at South Africa, whose territory surrounds Lesotho.

While Trump wants to kick out millions of immigrants, he's offering U.S. citizenship to the white Boer farmers in South Africa who have exploited Black people for centuries.

Trump also bragged that "we've ended the tyranny of so-called diversity." One of Trump's first acts after being inaugurated was to revoke a 60-year-old executive order establishing affirmative action in hiring by the U.S. Government.

He and Musk are trying to fire hundreds of thousands of government em-

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# Oppressed gender activists in Baltimore rally for Int'l Working Women's Day

By Jace Carter

On Saturday, March 8, women, transgender and queer organizers in the People's Power Assembly (PPA) and Women In Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha of Baltimore held a rally, march, and teach-in to commemorate International Working Women's Day, one of the major initiatives of the newly launched People's Fightback Network.

A spirited group including participants from the early Women's March gathered outside the Harriet Tubman Solidarity Center to hear opening remarks.

Close to 50 people took to the streets, with chants of "When women's [trans] [queer] [Black] [immigrant] lives are under attack, what do we do? Stand up, fight back!" and "Trump says 'Get back!' and we say 'Fight back!'" echoing off buildings.

They marched to the Women's Jail at Greenmount Avenue, where a mini rally was held. Joyce Butler from the People's Power Assembly delivered a message from Van Green about the terrible conditions women prisoners face at this jail. Melinda Butterfield of the Struggle for Socialism Party (SFSP) spoke about Trump's attacks on trans prisoners in federal prisons, where they're being forced into cell units based on their assignment at birth, and not on actual identity.

The protesters then took to the streets again and marched all the way back up to Calvert Street Park, where the community dinner and teach-in was held. It was reported that the final march, due to Calvert Street being a one-way street, caused significant traffic delays. Again, considering the group's size, being able to command the street for the entire duration was an incredible demonstration of strength and unity! At one point in the march, several young children took the lead.

**Melinda Butterfield** (SFSP) kicked off the teach-in as the keynote speaker, emphasizing that "the fascists running the government plan to eradicate us [the trans community]," and urging "the left to think bigger about how to fight back"



Baltimore, March 8 – on IWWD activists hold up Peoples Power Assembly banner: "Women & oppressed genders hold up half the sky, women fight back, International Women's Day."

SLL photo

who continue to resist an escalating threat of U.S.-Asian NATO

by "coupling local work and mutual aid with a larger, national and international fightback, one that seeks to mobilize millions and build alternative forms of political power."

Other women/LGBTQIA+ speakers at the teach-in included:

**Apryle Everly** (PPA & SFSP), who read a statement honoring the revolutionary legacy of Leila Khaled, a prominent Palestinian woman resistance leader who served in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) during the 1960s and '70s.

**Fidel Green** (PPA), who spoke about Sam Nordquist, a 24-year-old biracial trans man, and Tahiry Broom, a 29-year-old Black trans woman, both of whom were murdered. Despite clear evidence that both these murders were hate crimes, no such charges are currently being pursued against the people who killed them.

**Jace Carter** (PPA & SFSP), who spoke about reclaiming feminism as a working-class tool for liberation, rather than continuing to allow the ruling class to use it as a tool of U.S. imperialist propaganda. They also spoke about the history of the women's liberation movement in socialist China. They urged solidarity with the people of China and Korea

proxy war against both countries.

(During Jace's speech, an angry heckler passing by the park attempted to disrupt the teach-in, but Jace continued reading through their speech. A few PPA members in the audience moved swiftly to de-escalate the situation and guided the person away from the teach-in so it could continue without further disruption.)

**Khaliah Adhiambo Deya** (Progressive Labor Party), who read a solidarity statement from the PLP encouraging supporters to "fight for communism beyond a reform, beyond recognition, beyond the ability to be seen as a human being, because that is the reality that the working class truly deserves."

**Joyce B** (PPA), who read a solidarity statement from Tia Hamilton, owner of Urban Reads Bookstore, a Black-owned radical bookstore in the Waverly community. Tia and the store have recently been under constant racist threats of attack from far-right white supremacists, but the local community has rallied to their defense.

**Sharon Black** (Women In Struggle), who gave closing remarks highlighting the need for the working class to continue to interconnect all of our struggles against fascism.#

# Thousands in NYC protest the genocidal bombing of Gaza

SLL photos

By Struggle / La Lucha  
New York

March 18 — Thousands marched through the streets of midtown Manhattan tonight to protest the genocidal bombing of Gaza. An estimated 400 Palestinians, including 175 children, were killed by the Zionist apartheid state using U.S.-made bombs and planes.

The action was called on short notice by the Shut It Down 4 Palestine Coalition. People rallied in Times Square, carrying Palestinian flags and hundreds of signs and chanting, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!"

A short message was read from Mahmoud Khalil, a Columbia University graduate student who was kidnapped by ICE Gestapo agents and taken to Louisiana. He was singled out because he helped organize protests in defense of Palestine.



March 18, Manhattan — 2,000 Palestine supporters marched in Manhattan following the most recent U.S.-Israeli bombardment of Gaza



March 10, Manhattan — Protesters demanded the release of Mahmoud Khalil, a Columbia University graduate student kidnapped by ICE. He was singled out because he helped organize protests in defense of Palestine.

On March 15, at least a thousand people marched in Manhattan to free Mahmoud Khalil.

Columbia University refused to defend Khalil, a Palestinian, and his family, who were subjected to death threats. Instead, the Ivy League school has expelled, suspended, or fired students who protested. Some had their diplomas retracted.

One of those fired, Grant Miner, spoke at Times Square. He's the president of

United Auto Workers Local 2710, representing Columbia University's student workers.

Other speakers included representatives from the Palestinian Youth Movement; PAL-AWDA, The Palestine Right to Return Coalition; Neturei Karta, an anti-Zionist group of Orthodox Jews; the Party for Socialism and Liberation; and The People's Forum.

**Free Palestine! #**

# Trump-Musk regime revokes union rights for 47,000 TSA workers

By Lev Koufax

The Trump administration announced on March 10 that 47,000 Transportation Security Administration (TSA) workers would no longer have collective bargaining rights. The vast majority of these workers perform passenger screening and other security responsibilities at the United States' various airports.

The loss of these rights means that TSA workers will no longer be able to legally negotiate working conditions such as hours, health insurance, and progressive discipline. Essentially, TSA is now at liberty to treat its workforce as poorly as it pleases.

TSA has only been a union shop since 2011, bringing a short union tenure to an abrupt close. The AFGE campaign to or-



ganize the TSA workers lasted almost a decade and its conclusion represented a huge step forward for an underpaid and overworked airport security labor force.

Out of the 47,000 TSA workers in the bargaining unit, more than 25,000 were dues-paying members of the American Federation of Government Employees,

The aim of Trump's policy is clear: to break what is left of public-sector organized labor. This constitutes a threat to all organized labor.

the largest labor union in the federal government. The aim of this policy is clear: to break what is left of public-sector organized labor.

This is the latest in a series of anti-worker policies forced upon the federal labor force by the Trump and Musk regime. All workers and progressives must stand with federal workers as they face these attacks on their livelihoods and their basic rights as workers.

**Union jobs for all workers!  
Unions yes! Musk no! #**



# Imperialist puppetry exposed: HTS' 'New Syria' fuels sectarian massacres and Zionist collaboration

By Lev Koufax

The illusion has been quickly and violently shattered that the Western-backed Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) overthrow of the Syrian Arab Republic represented a genuine move towards democracy and sovereignty for the Syrian people.

For decades under the rule of the Al-Baath party, Syria enjoyed a secular culture where religious and ethnic minorities were explicitly protected in the constitution and policy. With the collapse of the Assad government and the Syrian Arab Republic more broadly, those secular protections have all but disappeared under HTS rule.

In fact, HTS has gone far beyond the end of legal protections. HTS and affiliated right-wing Islamist militias have launched a series of massacres against various religious and ethnic minorities in Syria. These vicious attacks have targeted Kurdish, Alawite, Druze, and Christian minority communities in Syria. While the terror campaign began in the towns and villages along the north-west coast, a region with a significant Alawite population, the violence has since spread across the country. HTS terrorists have targeted the Alawite community in particular not only due to their adherence to Shia Islam but also because Bashar Al-Assad, his family, and many of his supporters are Alawites themselves. The Christian community living in the same region has faced violence and repression as well.

HTS fighters have also murdered dozens of Druze people in southern Syria, Kurdish people in northern Syria, and have even escalated against Lebanese people living along Syria's border. The campaign against ethnic minorities in Syria has actually led to direct conflict between HTS and Lebanon's armed forces. Consequently, over 13,000 people have already fled from Syria to Lebanon.

All the while, HTS has refused to lift a finger to stop Israel from its advances in southern Syria and its continued destruction of all military infrastructure left over from the Assad government. On the contrary, the so-called new dem-



March 11 – Alawite refugees cross the al-Nahr al-Kabir river into the Lebanese village of Hekr El Dahri, fleeing the violence of U.S. and Israeli-backed government forces, who have been massacring Alawite and other ethnic minorities.

racist violence, and social chaos. All this in a country that was previously relatively stable, even under constant siege via Western sanctions and military intervention.

The tragedy unfolding in Syria highlights more than ever the need for genuine soli-

ocratic government of Syria under HTS has only expressed a desire to be friendly with the Zionist entity. Further, the HTS sham government has already banned public displays of "pro-Iranian" propaganda. All of these policies are clear indicators that HTS's Syria is a complete pawn of the West, meant to keep Syria divided and subservient to imperialism.

And even with all of these massacres against Syrian minority communities, Zionist-backed Druze leadership and U.S.-backed Kurdish leadership have still signed agreements to integrate their communities into the racist HTS government. While the Druze and Kurdish people should be free from persecution, this does not change the nature of deals where militia leaders sell out their communities in exchange for some limited political power inside a Western puppet government.

The terror campaign against Syrian minority communities has triggered organized armed resistance from commanders and troops formerly affiliated with the Syrian Arab Republic. These forces broadly reject U.S. intervention in their country and receive organizational support from allies in Iran and Lebanon.

While progressive resistance to these massacres is a welcome sight, the situation is still regrettable. The imperialist playbook has unfortunately worked in Syria to devastating effect. Just like Libya before it, U.S. military investment in right-wing Islamist militias has spiraled the entirety of Syria into ethnic division,

solidarity with progressive nationalist governments who refuse to bend the knee to imperialism.

*Lev Koufax is an anti-Zionist Jewish activist.*

## Hands off Rep. Al Green!

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ployees. Black workers account for 18.6% of overall federal employment. Twenty-nine percent of the 640,000 post office workers are Black.

Trump's allies in Congress want to cut \$1 billion from the budget of nearly half-Black Washington, D.C. They're forcing the city to paint over its Black Lives Matter plaza.

Inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, it will take even more millions in the streets to stop Trump, Musk and all the other billionaires. We can't depend on the Democratic Party leadership — who just capitulated to Trump by not stopping his budget in the Senate — to save us.

That's our job. We need to follow the example of Los Angeles activists who are stopping ICE from launching many deportation raids. More demonstrations are needed to protect the post offices and VA hospitals.

May Day marches have to be organized to defend immigrants and all working and poor people. The labor movement should call a new solidarity day.

Only the power of the people can stop Trump and Musk. #

# A union's 1984 strike helped end apartheid

## Today's clash between Trump and South Africa

Photo: Malaika H. Kambon

By Lallan Schoenstein

The Trump administration's expulsion of South Africa's ambassador from his post in Washington, D.C., is yet another outrage.

On March 17, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio expelled Ebrahim Rasool, South Africa's ambassador to the United States, in extremely undiplomatic language, calling him a "race-baiting politician." In a webinar at the South African Mapungubwe Institute, Ambassador Rasool characterized Trump as pursuing policies that were "a white supremacist response to growing demographic diversity in the United States."

The expulsion was deeply felt in San Francisco, where the predominantly Black members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 10, have special bonds with Rasool. That friendship is based on South Africa's recognition of the union's role in fighting apartheid and freeing Nelson Mandela.

Clarence Thomas, a Local 10 retiree and former executive treasurer, said, "I think that Rasool's removal by the Trump administration is a political act that had, in some degree, nothing to do with the ambassador at all. They used recent statements that he made to a think tank on the supremacist character of Trump's MAGA regime as the rationale."

### Trump's reasons for breaking relations with South Africa

The expulsion occurred after Trump had already cut off all U.S. aid bound for the country and offered refugee status and a "rapid pathway to citizenship" for white farmers. He cited "unjust racial discrimination" against white Afrikaners, a reaction to a recent Expropriation Act that the South African government passed to address the issue of wealth inequality and eliminate some remnants of apartheid, in which 75% of the country's private land is still owned by the tiny 7% of white Afrikaners. It's a reform law that prioritizes land restitution to empower farm workers and the use of land for the public good.

Trump's DOGE chief, Elon Musk, has accused his former country of discrimi-

nating against white farmers in the land ownership laws. Musk, a white supremacist, who waved a Nazi salute at Trump's inauguration, calls the land appropriation act the "genocide of white people in South Africa."

More immediately, Trump's anger was aroused by South Africa's action in taking the Israeli government to the International Criminal Court, specifically with the charge of genocide in Gaza. South Africa has been getting support for this intervention all around the world. The United States government, in support of the Zionist entity, has made threats against the personnel of the International Criminal Court, including sanctions.

South Africa's international relations are also at odds with the Trump administration's imperial prerogatives. The country has trade ties with China and is a partner in the Belt and Road Initiative and the BRICS group of nations.

South Africa has also had a long-term friendship with socialist Cuba, a country that Trump, and especially Rubio, with his family's Cuban exile background, are trying to strangle with sanctions.

### Ambassador Rasool's special friendship with ILWU Local 10

When Nelson Mandela gave his great speech at the Oakland Coliseum in 1990, he specifically acknowledged ILWU Local 10 for the 1984 action that it had taken in defying Taft-Hartley — defying its contract for 11 days and refusing to unload South African cargo. He placed Local 10 on the front lines of the struggle against apartheid.

In March 2013, there was a memorial for the rank-and-file leader Leo Robinson, one of the earliest organizers of the Anti-apartheid Movement in the U.S. Robinson first introduced a union resolution protesting apartheid to the membership of ILWU in 1976 after witnessing the massacre of Soweto students who were protesting the forced instruction in the Afrikaner language.

South African Consul General Cyril Ndaba and Ambassador Ebrahim Rasool came to Robinson's memorial in 2013 to



Consul-General Cyril Ndaba, James Curtis, ILWU Local 10, Ambassador Ebrahim Rasool, Clarence Thomas, ILWU Local 10, Delores Lemon-Thomas and Chris Silvera, IBT at Leo Robinson's ILWU Memorial in 2013.

honor his role in mobilizing workers to resist apartheid. They spoke on behalf of the people of South Africa to express gratitude by saying that without the ILWU under the leadership of Robinson, the end of apartheid may not have come so quickly, and Nelson Mandela would not have been freed as early.

Thomas stressed, "The anti-apartheid campaign was not initiated by the international union president. It was not done by the mayor of San Francisco or the governor of California; it was done by rank-and-filers. It really goes to show the power of the working class. Rasool was at Robinson's memorial to pay homage and respect not only to ILWU Local 10, but to the entire Bay Area who had become involved in the struggle.

Thomas explained: "There was an eight or nine-year period before the 11-day boycott of the South African ship, the Nedlloyd Kimberley, in 1984, when there was an educational campaign preparing for that historic action. When ships carrying South African cargo arrived, there were discussions with the longshore workers and the dispatchers regarding public demonstrations. The longshore workers who took those jobs knew that they would not receive a whole day's pay.

"It was during this period when Leo Robinson, Larry Wright, and others organized the Southern African Liberation Support Committee. They would invite members of the African National (ANC) to come to speak at Local 10. They showed videos explaining the horrors of apartheid in South Africa.

"I remember a worker by the name of Delmont Blakeney; he's passed on. He was a very bright guy, let's just say he was very street oriented. He said, to Leo Robinson, is this shit really gonna work — not working those ships? He lived to see that it did." #



# How U.S. plans to bleed Europe dry

By Sharon Black

The theatrical events of the previous week between Volodymyr Zelensky, Donald Trump, and JD Vance have been grist for all manner of bourgeois media lies designed to obfuscate events. Trump has been touted as pro-Putin. On the other hand, in some so-called anti-imperialist circles he is being hailed as a peace hero.

There is nothing further from the truth on both counts. As of this writing, there are no details of a final peace agreement. Trump's deal at this date looks more like a 30-day stall (giving Ukraine's troops a rest and time to resupply arms), rather than a long-term peace agreement that Russia is looking for. What has happened is that the U.S. has resumed sending weapons to Zelensky and that there are continuing talks on how to plunder Ukraine, i.e., "the rare earth mineral deal."

It would be important to remind readers that behind Trump are the Pentagon generals and that no recent shifts in tactics or strategy would have been undertaken without their agreement.

## Pivot to China

Despite baseless hope that the U.S. has chosen "peace" over the pursuit of imperialist interests — U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth in Brussels on February 12 (reading off policy drawn from Project 2025), laid out a division of labor in which Europe would continue Washington's proxy war on Russia while the U.S. pivots to another war of aggression with China in the Asia-Pacific.

Hegseth's exact words regarding China: "We also face a peer competitor in the Communist Chinese with the capability and intent to threaten our homeland and core national interests in the Indo-Pacific. The U.S. is prioritizing deterring war with China in the Pacific, recognizing the reality of scarcity, and making the resourcing trade-offs to ensure deterrence does not fail."

This turn of policy has as its backdrop the disintegration of Ukraine's internal situation, which was based on severe losses on the battlefield. The fact that Ukraine could not win the war was known for some time by the U.S. ruling

class and laid out in a RAND Corporation position paper commissioned by the Pentagon.

## Expanding arms industry in Europe

U.S. imperialism has for the time being unilaterally dumped the Ukraine war on its European counterparts to focus on war with China. This has prompted rushed action among European leaders who have followed Washington, lock, stock, and barrel, for the last three years.

The chest-beating in Europe is likely staged to convince the working class of Europe that more sacrifice and suffering is needed and inevitable.

Again, in Hegseth's own words at the same Brussels meeting, before the uproar swept the press:

"Expanding your defense industrial base is important, leveling with your citizens about the threat facing Europe. Part of this is speaking frankly with your people about how this threat can only be met by spending more on defense. Two percent is not enough; President Trump has called for 5%, and I agree."

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# Attempted trans genocide is a warning to working class

*Continued from page 1*

than I care to admit recently.

A few days ago, a local friend posted an update to let us know she's still alive and getting help.

One of the lawsuits challenging Trump's executive order banning gender-affirming care for trans youth was brought by the parents of a young person who committed suicide out of fear of losing access to health care. It's only been in the last several years that significant numbers of trans kids have been able to get the support and treatment they need, and to see it ripped away is horrifying for those of us who were forced to go through the wrong puberty.

## Every trans suicide is a murder.

I'm not here to plead for sympathy and understanding. Pleading has never won queers anything. But I do want you to understand what it means if trans genocide is allowed to continue without resistance from the rest of the working class.

It will not stop with us — the fascist death machine will come for you and yours, sooner or later.

## Attack on trans lives

Trump and his Project 2025 handlers launched an all-out attack on trans lives his first day back in office. A steady stream of executive orders declared that the U.S. government does not recognize the existence of trans people; that we will be deprived of life-saving health care; that we may not use public restrooms; that trans women in federal prisons will be forcibly detransitioned and thrown into men's prisons to face rape and torture.

Our ability to travel safely between states was already extremely limited, just like our pregnant cisgender sisters. Now our passports are being invalidated, too. The State Department is systematically making it impossible for trans people to leave or enter the country.

Government websites and facilities have been scrubbed of all references to trans people — even the Stonewall National Monument, where trans people of color like Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera led one of the first great battles of the modern queer rights movement.

Trans students are not to be allowed to use school restrooms, play sports,

or have their true names and identities acknowledged by school staff. Teachers who do so are threatened with arrest as sex offenders.

The brunt of these attacks will fall first and hardest on Black, Brown and Indigenous trans people, who are already the biggest targets of anti-trans violence.

Trump's executive orders are being challenged in court, and often have no legal basis. But what matters is that institutions and companies are rushing to comply anyway.

Hospital systems in New York, California and other states immediately fell in line, cancelling appointments and prescriptions for trans youth. Threatened with funding cuts, domestic violence and rape support groups dropped all reference to trans people.

DoorDash, the food delivery company, has ordered its workers to use their "legal name" when making deliveries instead of chosen names. Many trans people rely on this kind of work, and this decision puts their lives in danger.

A friend in the South who works for DoorDash told me, "I'm so scared."

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# while waging war on China

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## The European Union and Germany

In response to Washington's dictates, Europe's counterparts quickly scrambled to increase military spending. The European Investment Bank lifted rules barring lending for military use, which will also give the green light to other private-sector bankers and bond lenders. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, announced an 800 billion euros war fund over the next four years.

Friedrich Merz, Germany's new conservative Chancellor-in-waiting, pushed sweeping plans to revive its armed forces with the massive borrowing of over 500 billion euros aimed at upping weapons manufacturing. Germany is the largest European economy.

## Germany's economy in contraction

It's important to note that Germany's economy has been in severe contraction for the last two years, marked by declining manufacturing. This has resulted in layoffs, including at Volkswagen, which cut 35,000 jobs and shifted some production to Mexico.

The general capitalist decline unleashed in 2008 impacted the world capi-

talist system and was exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis and the war on Russia. Before the war, European countries depended on cheap gas and mineral imports from Russia and on exports of cars, machinery, equipment, and consumer goods to Russia.

Both sanctions and the destruction of the Nord Stream pipeline, widely attributed to the U.S. Pentagon, have caused scarcity and inflation, which have been borne by Europe's working class.

## The big winners are U.S. weapons manufacturers

Any increase in weapons manufacturing on European soil will be negligible compared to the European NATO countries' dependence on U.S. weapons manufacturers.

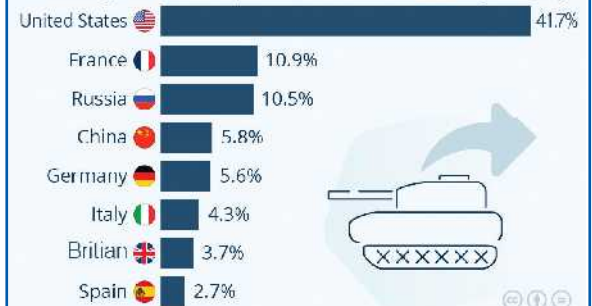
Arms imports have more than doubled in the last five years, with 60% from the U.S. This includes almost 500 combat aircraft and other weapons still on order.

Italy and Britain also bought U.S.-made F-35 fighter jets and Patriot anti-air defense systems. Above is a graph that highlights the U.S.'s position on weapons exports.

The banks and bond market will be

## The World's Biggest Arms Exporters

Share of global arms exports from 2019 to 2023, by country



Based on size/value of arms transfer independent of purchase price  
Source: SIPRI

statista

the biggest winners, outside of war manufacturers. The German and European working classes will be the losers.

## Workers must fight back

Every bit of this "rearmament" will cost the working class dearly in the form of greater poverty, cuts in services, higher prices, and slashed wages. Workers' lives will be at risk if the ruling elite succeeds in the reintroduction of compulsory military service and sending troops to Ukraine.

*The next chapter must be aimed at stopping imperialist war, turning it around to fight the global billionaire class.*

# Attempted trans genocide is a warning to working class

Continued from page 8

## First they came

What does it mean when official policy restricts one small group in society from existing in public, unable to access health care, find a job or hold onto one? What does it mean when this group is cut off from the ability to travel, while politicians and media relentlessly blame them for society's ills?

What does it mean when this group is deliberately isolated from other communities that should be natural allies? What does it mean when violence against them is not only tolerated, but encouraged?

I believe it's a warning to every other marginalized group, the working class, and anyone who thinks about fighting back: You could be next.

Trans people make up an estimated 1% to 2% of the population. The vast majority of us are workers, but there's no sector of the economy that is reliant on trans people in the way that agriculture, construction, and restaurants are dependent on

immigrant labor. To the ruling class, we are expendable. We can be exterminated as an example to others, and since trans lives are so devalued, they believe few will rise to object on our behalf.

In my trans community, in New York, everyone is hurrying to secure whatever health care and documentation they can, establishing networks for DIY care, helping each other with mutual aid, and packing emergency go bags. We all know the moment is fast approaching when we may have to flee or be killed. It's simply understood among trans people that this is the situation we face.

But I think it's important for reproductive rights activists, community organizers, union members, Amazon workers, unemployed people to understand what's happening. Because the only way any of us survive what's coming is if we take seriously the need to protect and support each other.

The word is solidarity: An injury to one is an injury to all.

## No more business as usual

We need the left to think bigger about how to fight back. It's not just that electoralism and the Democratic Party have proven utterly bankrupt in the fight against fascism. Local work and mutual aid are crucial, BUT. If that work isn't coupled with a larger, national and international fightback, one that seeks to mobilize millions and build alternative forms of political power, then all it amounts to is hospice care, not liberation.

Business as usual is over. Millions already have or soon will lose their jobs and benefits. Millions will be displaced. It's already begun.

What would it look like to mobilize the affected communities and movements all over the country to occupy Washington, D.C., and refuse to leave? How would that require us to think about things like self-defense and community defense, in ways we haven't seen since the Black Panthers and the Civil Rights Movement?

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# 'Fire of resistance to imperialism & fascism must flare up'

By Interforum

*This statement was prepared by the Ukrainian Marxist organization Borotba (Struggle) and adopted by the participants of Interforum (International Anti-fascist Forum), which was held in Lugansk, capital of the Lugansk People's Republic, on Feb. 25, 2025. Borotba has been banned in Ukraine since 2014.*

## Declaration of the Interforum: International Anti-fascist Forum of Donbass

May 9 marks 80 years since the Great Victory of the Soviet Union over Nazi Germany. Almost a whole century separates us from those events; however, it is precisely now that we see the colossal influence they continue to have on the entire world.

The Second World War did not begin "just like that." It did not arise from thin air. It was brought about by a tangle of contradictions in international politics, which they tried to cut through with the help of war.

The reasons that divided the world into supporters of Nazi ideas and anti-fascists more than 80 years ago exist today. Western corporations and finance capital, for many years, armed Hitler and created a capable army in order to direct it against those from whom they felt threatened: the Soviet Union.

Today we see a repetition of the world tragedy that occurred in the 1930s-40s. Western imperialism has already begun aggression against those who disagree with the U.S.-centric world order. It is gathering a strike force aimed at the peoples and countries that are trying to pursue independent and sovereign policies: against Russia, China, North Korea, Cuba, Iran, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and many others.

This strike force includes Ukrainian fascists, Israeli Zionists, jihadists from Africa and the Middle East, and Latin American "death squads." This multifaceted "international" of new fascism, which has already begun its "crusade" against the peoples of the planet, has as its client and sponsor transnational financial capital.

Today, this "evil international" is changing leadership – instead of the failed neoliberals, it is acquiring harsh,

cynical, and aggressive leaders in the form of the new right-wing administration of the USA under Donald Trump and the billionaire Elon Musk, raising his hand in a Nazi salute.

The new leadership in Washington has already made its claims on the Panama Canal, expressed support for the Argentine neoliberal fascist Javier Milei and European far-rightists, begun threatening Russia with new sanctions and Iran with war, and supported the Israeli genocide in Gaza.

## Key turning point

The aggression of the West against the peoples of the former USSR, especially Russia, which began at the hands of the fascist regime in Kiev in 2014, became the key turning point in the politics of Western imperialism toward militarization, reaction, and preparation for a great war.

Right here, we are convinced, the fire of resistance to imperialism and the new fascism must also flare up.

The first sparks of this resistance were the heroic struggle of Donbass against Ukrainian Nazism, continued by Russia's Special Military Operation. We emphasize that this is not an isolated or regional situation – it is part of the global struggle against the USA, NATO, the European Union, and other forces and organizations of imperialist hegemony.

The goal of our enemies is the same as it was more than 80 years ago – the capture and subjugation of the markets, natural and human resources of the planet, and the destruction of an alternative to the existing world order, which was represented by the USSR at that time, and now by a number of countries opposing the unipolar U.S.-centered world.

The rightward turn toward reaction and new fascism, which is currently happening in the West, can only be resisted by a united front of international anti-fascist and anti-imperialist solidarity of peoples. Our Forum is intended to become one of the points of crystallization of this resistance.

We call on everyone who shares our concerns about the growth of fascist sentiments in society not to remain silent, but to openly and loudly express their position!

We call on everyone on the 80th anni-

versary of the Great Victory to honor the memory of anti-fascist heroes in all countries, where people took the path of struggle against the brown plague: the heroes of ELAS in Greece, anti-fascists of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia, participants in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and partisans of the People's Army in Poland, Garibaldian Brigades and Matteotti Brigades in Italy, comrades of Ernst Thälmann in Germany, thousands of underground fighters of the Resistance in France, Spain, Austria, Romania, and other countries!

We call to build and strengthen ties with likeminded people today, because tomorrow we will all face a difficult fight, and we need to prepare for it now!

**For international solidarity and joint actions against fascism and imperialism! #**

## Trans genocide

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We need to think more inclusively as our enemies try to make us more isolated from each other. We need to think about what kind of power we need to challenge fascism and genocide.

For me, hope lies in the example of the Palestinian people, and especially Palestinian women. I'm old enough to remember when having a Palestinian speaker at a movement event was rare and controversial. I remember when the inclusion of Palestine solidarity was considered a reason by many to split the anti-war movement.

But in the last 18 months, the whole world rose up for Gaza – because against all odds, the Palestinians never surrendered. They never gave up on the dream of liberating their homeland, and never will.

Trans people will continue to be born. We walk through fire to be our true selves. Like the people of Palestine, trans people will struggle, will endure, generation after generation, until liberation.

Please repeat after me:

**Trans women are women!**

**Trans men are men!**

**Nonbinary people are who they say they are!**

**Intersex people exist!**

**Reproductive rights, transition rights: Our bodies, our choice!**

**Death before detransition! #**



# European Court rules Ukraine guilty in Odessa massacre

By Gary Wilson

On March 13, the European Court of Human Rights delivered a scathing ruling, holding Ukraine responsible for the massacre of scores of anti-Maidan activists in Odessa on May 2, 2014.

This ruling has received limited coverage in Western media outlets, as it confirms the Ukrainian regime's support of the neo-Nazis through its inaction and refusal to take any measures against the killers.

On that day, nearly 50 anti-fascists were massacred. Activists were attacked by a racist neo-Nazi mob and driven into the House of Trade Unions, which was then set afire. Some anti-fascists were burned alive; others were shot or beaten to death as they tried to escape the blaze. The youngest victim was just 17.

(For more on the Odessa massacre, see the interview with massacre survivor Alexey Albu conducted by Struggle-La Lucha co-editor Melinda Butterfield in Simferopol, Crimea, in September 2014.)

The Court ruled that there had been "violations of the right to life/investigation on account of the authorities' failure to ... prevent the violence in Odessa and to ensure timely rescue measures for people trapped in the fire."

The Court decision makes clear that firefighters were instructed not to respond to emergency calls from people trapped in the city's House of Trade Unions when it was set ablaze. The Maidan coup regime actively wanted these people to die.

## The 2014 Maidan coup

In February 2014, a U.S.-backed coup overthrew the elected government of Ukraine and installed a far-right regime representing Western imperialist interests, local oligarchs and neo-Nazis. It's known as the Maidan coup, which refers to the central square in Kiev, Maidan Nezalezhnosti, where pro-NATO rallies were staged.

Many Ukrainians resisted the Maidan coup, particularly in the working class. In the Maidan civil war, fascist gangs emerged as a force for the coup. Resistance to the coup was strongest in the eastern section of the country. In Odessa, a neo-Nazi pro-Maidan gang targeted the Odessa House of Trade Unions, near the center of the resistance. The building was



After driving activists into the Odessa House of Trade Unions, Ukrainian neo-Nazis set fire to the building. Then they shot and beat to death people trying to escape the inferno.

firebombed and at least 46 anti-fascists and labor activists were burned alive.

The resistance to the Maidan coup has continued from 2014 to today. The independent Donetsk People's Republic and Lugansk People's Republic were created when the people there voted overwhelmingly (89% and 96%) to secede from the Maidan regime. They have been subjected to continuous attack since then, particularly by the Ukrainian National Guard's Azov regiment, a neo-Nazi stormtrooper-like operation. More than 14,000 were killed in Ukraine's war on Donetsk and Lugansk before Russia's special military operation to stop the neo-Nazi war on these independent republics.

The U.S. had orchestrated the 2014 Maidan coup, seeking to seize control of Ukraine's resources and to dominate the region, particularly targeting Russia. After years of bloodshed, their plan failed.

## Rare earth minerals

Now, Trump wants to stop the massive military campaign against Russia (estimated cost so far is \$183 billion since 2022) to focus on a bigger target: China. Don't mistake Trump's tactics as a pursuit of peace. Trump is demanding a massive price for ending the proxy war against Russia: Ukraine's mineral wealth — said to be worth \$13 trillion total.

As John Helmer reported, "Because the U.S. auto, aerospace, and artificial intelligence industries are heavily dependent for their supplies of lithium, titanium, and other rare earth minerals (REM) on two enemy states, China and Russia, they should be replaced as quickly as possible by a friendly source. ...

"The cheapest solution is to take over the Ukrainian sources of these minerals and metals at zero cost of acquisition — zero cost because Ukraine can be pressed to hand over its sources as payback for the U.S. financing of the war against Russia."

Who proposed this solution to Trump? "It was Elon Musk," Helmer reports.

"His Tesla company is the largest consumer of lithium and producer of lithium batteries for electric vehicles in the U.S., with his annual tonnage exceeding the four next largest producers combined. Musk also is a large consumer of titanium, both for Tesla cars and for his SpaceX company's rockets.

"Also, in Musk's plans for cornering the artificial intelligence (AI) market with his xAI company, rare earth metals (REM) are essential. In fact, these metals are not rare — it's just that they exist in low concentrations, which are difficult and expensive to extract. They are crucial components of the semiconductors that provide the computing power that drives AI. They possess uniquely powerful magnetic qualities and are excellent at conducting electricity and resisting heat."

Trump has won Zelensky's agreement to turn over Ukraine's rare earth minerals. But that's not enough. The fact is (and this isn't being reported in any U.S. media) about 53% of the titanium, lithium, and rare earth minerals that the Ukraine regime claims are located in the four regions annexed by Russia in September 2022 (Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson) This is where Russia began its special military operation against the neo-Nazi incursion by the Kiev regime headed by Volodymyr Zelensky. #

# Orden ejecutiva para la independencia de Puerto Rico

Por Berta Joubert-Ceci

El problema central que tenemos en Puerto Rico es nuestra falta de soberanía por ser una colonia de los Estados Unidos. Impide que desarrollemos una economía que sostenga al pueblo de una manera digna y consistente con nuestra naturaleza sin ser cautiva de los caprichos del imperio del norte.

Después de siglos de dominación española junto a Cuba y Filipinas, la Guerra Hispanoamericana vino a sellar el próximo cautiverio, esta vez a manos de EUA. Pero no sin antes de que PR tuviera Autonomía, aunque fueron apenas unos meses antes de que las tropas gringas nos invadieran en 1898. Así que, al final de esa guerra, el Tratado de París firmado entre España y EUA, que cedía PR a los gringos, lo que formalizó fue el robo de una incipiente nación libre.

Y desde entonces se continuó la lucha por la independencia, esta vez contra el norte. Una lucha diversa, con armas, con huelgas, y con mucha represión que ha

Presidente Donald Trump lanza toallas de papel al público mientras reparte suministros en el Calvary Chapel, el martes 3 de octubre de 2017, en Guaynabo, Puerto Rico.



documento a la Casa Blanca como una orden ejecutiva para la independencia de PR. Responden a la gran crisis que enfrenta nuestro país, y aprovechan la ejecutoria del presidente gringo para adelantar de este modo la liberación de PR.

costado vidas como la que conmemoramos este pasado 21 de marzo, la Masacre de Ponce en el 1937 donde la policía acribilló a 19 boricuas y dejó 150 heridos. Por años se han tratado casi todas las estrategias, incluyendo plebiscitos y elecciones tipo alianzas, pero hasta el momento todo ha sido infructuoso.

Ahora, con la nueva administración gringa de Trump, quien ha estado firmando órdenes ejecutivas a diestra y siniestra cambiando la realidad política de los EUA, un grupo de boricuas, mujeres y hombres dignos, independentistas expertos en varios campos, abogacía, derecho internacional, economía, ciencias sociales, profesores universitarios y comunicadores, han sometido un borrador, un

tar de este modo la liberación de PR.

Esto ha suscitado una avalancha de críticas por parte del gobierno local y sus secuaces corruptos que por décadas han desangrado nuestro país. Pero también ha puesto en la palestra pública el tema tan importante de la Independencia. Ya van dos semanas de discusiones públicas, incluyendo algunas serias y reflexivas.

Queda ahora saber cual será la recepción en Casa Blanca. Pero de todas formas, ya se ha avanzado en la discusión por el pueblo de la necesidad de independencia. Y esto de por sí, es un gran logro. #

Desde Puerto Rico, para Radio Clarín de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci.



## Who ordered the murder of Marielle Franco?

By Catarina Damasceno

On March 14, 2018, the news of an attempt on Marielle Franco's life arrived as a notification in a WhatsApp group. It was a shock, but not unimaginable for a Black, bisexual woman born in the Maré favela in Rio de Janeiro who embodied the struggles of the working class to be persecuted in Brazil.

Franco was on her way home from a roundtable discussion organized by the Socialism and Liberty Party (PSOL), the same party through which she was elected to the Rio de Janeiro City Council in 2016. Franco left the event accompanied by her driver, Anderson Gomes, and a parliamentary aide, Fernanda Chaves.

Shortly after departing, their car was ambushed in the Estácio neighborhood. The assassins, who were in another vehicle, fired multiple shots. Franco was killed, with three bullets to the head and one to the neck. Gomes was also fatally shot. Fernanda Chaves survived the attack. The investigation into the murders revealed that the ammunition used was linked to a batch sold to the Federal Police.



Mariella Franco, a Rio de Janeiro City Council member who protested police violence, was assassinated on March 14, 2018.

Throughout her career, Marielle Franco had been a vocal advocate for ending police brutality in Rio de Janeiro, a city notorious for its high levels of police violence. Between 2019 and 2023, the city's police were reported to have killed 21,498 people, making it one of the deadliest cities in the world in terms of police violence. Given the likelihood of underreporting, the actual number of fatalities

is even higher. Franco's death signaled that her advocacy for victims of police violence had made her a target: someone was deeply bothered by her presence as an advocate in the City Council.

Six years later, in October 2024, two former police officers, Ronnie Lessa and Elcio de Queiroz, were convicted for their roles in Franco's murder. Lessa received a sentence of 78 years and 9 months, while Queiroz was sentenced to 59 years. Despite this conviction, the crucial question of who ordered Franco's assassination remains unanswered.

As a Black, bisexual woman from the working class, Franco embodied the intersectional struggle beyond the borders of Rio de Janeiro and Brazil. Her legacy will not be forgotten, and we will never stop demanding the answer to who ordered her murder.

Marielle Franco, presente! #

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